CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for providing forecasting and modeling, comprising:

collecting data in a multi-user collaborative environment over a data network; and

generating a financial model with re-usable financial components based upon the collected data, wherein the financial model supports user approval of selected ones of the financial components.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the collected data resides within a spreadsheet, the method comprising:

mapping content from a plurality of cells of a spreadsheet to a plurality of objects, wherein the content includes the data and formulas for input into the financial model.

3. A method according to claim 1, wherein the collected data resides within a spreadsheet, the method comprising:

mapping content including the data from a plurality of cells of a spreadsheet to one or more classes, wherein the class duplicates functionality of the spreadsheet if the class is used to create an object.

4. A method according to claim 1, the method comprising:

outputting a simulation result from the financial model;

providing a user with a plurality of input parameters including operators;

dynamically receiving one of the input parameters from the user in support of what-if analysis of the financial model; and

generating another simulation result in response to the received input parameter for retrieval by the user over the data network.

5. A method according to claim 4, the method comprising:

performing error checking of the simulation result to determine absence of a constraint.

6. A method according to claim 4, the method comprising:

generating a report of the simulation result via a list query language module that specifies and executes queries in list algebra.

7. A method according to claim 6, the method comprising:

presenting a graphical user interface (GUI) to a host for display of the report to the user, wherein the GUI supports options to format the report.

8. A method according to claim 1, wherein a first user issues a request object for requesting information relating to financial model, and the request object includes one of an activator and program to collect the information and to validate a response from the second user, the response object conforming to a class interface specified by the first user, the method further comprising:

storing the request object; and

selectively forwarding the request object to a second user.

9. A computer-readable medium bearing instructions for providing forecasting and modeling, the instructions being arranged, upon execution, to cause one or more processors to perform the step of a method according to claim 1.

10. A system for providing forecasting and modeling, the system comprising:

means for collecting data in a multi-user collaborative environment over a data network; and

a modeling module configured to generate a financial model with re-usable financial components based upon the collected data, wherein the financial model supports user approval of selected ones of the financial components.

11. A system according to claim 10, wherein the collected data resides within a spreadsheet, the system comprising:

a spreadsheet-to-object mapper configured to map content from a plurality of cells of a spreadsheet to a plurality of objects, wherein the content includes the data and formulas for input into the financial model.

12. A system according to claim 10, wherein the collected data resides within a spreadsheet, the system comprising:

a spreadsheet-to-class mapper configured to map content including the data from a plurality of cells of a spreadsheet to one or more classes, wherein the class duplicates functionality of the spreadsheet if the class is used to create an object.

13. A system according to claim 10, the system comprising:

a what-if analysis module configured to dynamically process an input parameter from a user, the input parameter corresponding to a simulation result from the financial model, the input parameter including an operator.

14. A system according to claim 13, the system comprising:

a testing module configured to perform error checking of the simulation result to determine absence of a constraint.

15. A system according to claim 13, the system comprising:

a list query language module configured to generate a report of the simulation result, wherein the list query language module specifies and executes queries in list algebra.

16. A system according to claim 15, the system comprising:

a graphical user interface (GUI) module configured to display the report via a host to the user, wherein the GUI module supports options to format the report.

17. A system according to claim 10, wherein a first user issues a request object for requesting information relating to financial model, and the request object includes one of an activator and program to collect the information and to validate a response from the second user, the response object conforming to a class interface specified by the first user, the system further comprising:

an object storage system configured to store the request object; and

a workflow router configured to selectively forward the request object to a second user.

18. A system according to claim 10, the system comprising:

a strategy game module configured to solicit input from a plurality of users to simulate a plurality of scenarios relating to the financial model, the scenarios corresponding to different competitive goals assigned to the users.

19. A method for providing collaborative forecasting and modeling, the method comprising:

storing a request object submitted by a first user and destined for a second user, wherein the request object requests information relating to a financial model, and the request object includes one of an activator and program to collect the information and to validate a response from the second user, the response object conforming to a class interface specified by the first user; and

routing the request object to a second user,

wherein the second user selectively delegates responsibility for responding to the request object to a third user.